593 was with his brother and not his brother's sons. When the father persisted with his intention to embarrass his nephews, his sons, as a last alternative, threatened to leave him. In the face of this threat, the father capitulated.

The rights and duties of the father-son relationship, although they do not change in sentiment, will change in content during the lifetime of the father. The main change [421] in content will be a reflection of a change in property re- 593 lations. The Bedouin believe that this is the way it ought 599 to be; they say that

> A son must respect and obey his father. The son must do anything that he can to help and please his father. When the son grows up and begins to earn money, he must contribute generously to his father. A son pleases his father by giving him money and helping him to be comfortable.

593 In boyhood and manhood, the father has disposal over his son's 596 labor. As long as a son lives in his father's naja' this is [464] so. One son, who worked for an American oil company in the desert, regularly turned over his pay check to his father. It is the father who decides where the son will live, and, whether or not he will have his own domicile away from the main naja'. When the son marries and brings his wife to the [591] naja', he will usually set up his tent next to his father's tent. The tent is given to the boy by his father. During 593 the son's growing-up period, he will be given, as gifts on 431 various occasions, a sheep or a number of sheep which will be kept with the father's flock.

593 be kept with the father's flock. Only in the case of a
●[591] man's owning, or using, a large piece of land in the pasture area of al-Qasr will his son live away from the main part of the naja', i.e., away from his father's tent. The son then serves as his father's shepherd.

593 In the 'izba sector of al-Qasr, the pattern is gener-
591 ally the same except that the son will be given a room in
184 the house rather than a tent when he marries. Since the land in this area is more scarce and a matter of official ownership, the son is not likely to have his own house during his father's lifetime.

593 When the son does marry, the marriage proceedings may
584 be initiated by either the son or the father. But, under no circumstances that I heard of, would the son approach the father with the idea of his marriage; the son should communicate his desire to marry, first of all, to either his father's brother or his mother's brother. As the Bedouins
593 say, "Marriage is an agreement between fathers." What they
584 mean is that marriage is an agreement between tertiary groups.
*613 A father upon hearing of his son's wish to marry, for the boy's uncle will immediately tell the father, consults with the head of his tertiary group about such a proposed marriage. This is not a formal procedure but, certainly, the father would not go ahead with the marriage without making the matter public. In other words, marriage in al-Qasr is a

CHAPTER V

MARRIAGE: A CONTRACTUAL RELATIONSHIP

593 578 A survey of all disputes occurring among the eilat Aggary in the last five years shows that more than 70% were disputes over "women," the usual phrase referring to cases involving marital relations. Disagreement over matters arising out of quarrels between husband and wife or between one of the spouses and his or her in-laws often constitute the basis for these disputes. What seems to make marriage and the family particularly productive of conflict is the fact that although residence is commonly virilocal, and the majority of the women leaving their own families to live with the husband, the woman retains her membership in her father's family after the marriage, and her agnatic group keeps an active interest in her, even after she is married. Marriage then brings face to face the interests of two groups. These interests affect the relationship between the married couple; and, more importantly, the relationship between the latter affects the interests of their respective groups. This, in many instances, leads to direct conflict between the two groups.

593 578 602 613 [591]

581 671 585 675 The position of the Awlad Ali daraieb with regard to marriage relations is based on the Islamic law with minor modifications to suit the requirements of local life. According to the Muslim law, marriage is a civil contract affected by the request of one party and the agreement of the other. No witnesses are needed for the legalization of the marriage, according to some of the Shi'a sects, although the Sunni schools of Muslim jurisprudence insist that two adult male and two adult females

583 Among Awlad Ali the payment of the bridewealth signifies the com-
[584] pletion of the marriage contract. The mahr is not paid to the woman but
583 to her father or closest male kin. Usually the mahr is paid in money.
178 This, however, seems to be a recent phenomenon. Until the turn of the century, according to informants, the mahr was paid only in sheep and
583 goats. The practice is still followed by a number of tribal segments
178 of Ali Ahmar who occupy the western most part of the area where pasture
184 is more abundant and reliable and where the permanent pasture of the green mountains of Cyrenaica is close by. Other tribal segments still insist that at least one-fourth of the mahr should be paid in livestock, but the majority of the people accept money. The main purpose of the
583 mahr among Awlad Ali is to legalize the marriage contract and to put
[584] emphasis on the reciprocal oblications that the marriage created between
[182] the two families of the bride and the groom. It also works as an insurance for good behavior on the part of both the husband and the wife.
583 If the husband mistreats his wife or fails to give her the rights legally
593 hers by marriage, he risks the chance of losing the mahr and being forced
586 to divorce her. On the other hand, if the wife fails to behave in the customary way expected from a wife, the husband could divorce her and have the right to get back his mahr. This is particularly inconvenient in cases where all or part of the mahr is paid in livestock, in which case it becomes part of the father's herd and hard to take away in case of divorce. It is therefore in the interest of her family to keep the marriage. In this way their interference in the marriage is checked.
[591] This is especially important among Awlad Ali where, although the mar-
[592] riage is usually patrilocal, the woman retains membership in her father's household even after marriage.

593 As a girl in her father's household, the woman is under the direct authority of her father, who is responsible for her. When the father dies, this responsibility, as well as the authority, goes to her brother or her closest male kin in the order specified earlier. At marriage the [591] [606] girl usually moves to live with her husband, and this subjects her to his control and sometimes to that of his parents, if the couple lives with them. But the authority of the husband over his wife remains 593 secondary to that of her father. The woman's membership in her father's 594 household does not cease with marriage, and the strength of her relations to her kin is maintained by their frequent visits to her new residence and by her occasional visits to them. This right of visitation 593 cannot be denied by the husband who not only has to allow such visits, 594 606 but is also required to treat members of his wife's family, especially her father, with great respect and hospitality. If the husband fails [586] to do so, the wife's father can order her to leave her husband and go back to his household with him.

This point is illustrated by the case of Muftah from the Esheibat tribe in the area of Matruh, whose older daughter is married to Hemeida from the Geneishat segment, which lives in the area of Fokah some 80 miles to the east of Matruh. One winter day in 1965, while passing near the area where his daughter lived, Muftah decided to pay her a visit. When he arrived, her husband was not at home; he was in the market in a nearby town selling sheep. When he came back late that evening, he greeted Muftah with the customary slaughter of a goat and invited the neighbors to the occasion. After dinner Muftah wanted to rest. It was a very hot night, so his son-in-law brought a rug and spread it outside the tent in the cool air. After that he retired to his tent where he spent the night inside.

5: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1967 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

682 To complete this general statement, two further circumstances are cited by the
602 Bedouin. If a man kills a related person who is not an agnate (it is expressed as killing the mother's brother) the breach in relationships must be healed as quickly as possible. The convention for dealing with this is that the offender, bound hand and foot, mounted on a horse, is sent to the camp of ' the owner of the blood ', in the company of a holy man, there to make an offer of his life, saying: ' Here is my knife, my life is yours; here is my shroud, my life is yours.' No Bedouin would agree for a moment to undertake this journey if he thought the offer might be accepted. In Bedouin sentiments a life offered in this way cannot be taken. It is the convention which precedes a peace meeting and blood money. Any other way of dealing with the confusion, which spreads as a result of a homicide between cognates, is excluded.

682 Secondly, if a woman is killed, whatever the intersegmentary distance, the homi-
562 cide is said to be accidental, because a man never ' intends ' to kill a woman. Blood-
613 money arrangements are made as soon as possible, and the wealth—half that of a man—passes to the deceased's father, not to her husband, for a woman's ' bone ' always belongs to her father. Obviously women cannot be allowed to enter into
[582 feud; since it is demographically compelling (apart from other reasons) for some of
• [591 them to marry outside their natal groups, then they might well find themselves residents in the enemy's camps, if they were to become involved in feuds.

121 This statement of the different means available for the regulation of homicide at
682 the several orders of tribal segmentation is the view the Bedouin themselves hold of
613 their relationships. An analysis of the facts presented thus far could bring out a number of interesting points with regard to the relativity of morals, the typification
829 of acts by their social context, the significance of the orders of segmentation, and so
619 on. Rather than proceed along these lines, however, it is more urgently necessary to reflect on the significance of the fact that the arrangement of the material in terms of what is usually called the lineage structure coincides with the Bedouin ordering of the same details. It is, of course, important to note that the account is not based on mere hearsay evidence. Each statement made can be documented from known homicides, and to this extent the model that has been used is consistent with reality. The model, nevertheless, can only be a representation of what a particular people, the Bedouin, conceive their social reality to be; it is a kind of ideology which enables them, without making absurd demands on their credulity, to understand their field of social relationships, and to give particular relationships their *raison d'être*. But, as will be shown, it would be a serious error to mistake such a folk model for sociological analysis. Such an error is difficult to avoid because the Bedouin, when defending their view, are able to cite enough bits and pieces of reality to make their argument con-
121 vincing. The flaw in the reasoning is seen when it can be shown that its consequences
114 are absurd. As an example of what is meant, the statement that feud is attached to
613 groups at the secondary order of segmentation may be considered. If the statement were true, if each and every secondary section were at feud one with the other (and
619 in a structural sense this ought to be so), then each tribe would be divided into small
829 mutually hostile groups, which completely lacked any possibility of movement, even
578 for pasturing purposes. Presented with this, the Bedouin would argue that this is not in fact so, because secondary and primary sections are interlinked in many ways. That is, they evoke what to them are contingencies to explain why they are at feud with one

band is required to take gifts to his mother-in-law in recognition of the fact that she nourished his wife as an infant (the literal meaning of the word used for this gift is "milk"). A return visit is made and gifts are given to the daughter. When the first child is born an animal is presented by the affines, and if the child is a male, the gift may be several sheep, or even a few camels if the father-in-law is very wealthy. Formal exchange of gifts continue, but, in addition, informal transfers are made. Moreover, if relations between a man and his father-in-law develop favourably, it is not uncommon for a young husband, during the early years of marriage, to move away from his father and pitch his tent alongside that of his father-in-law. Marriage gives a son affinal relations of his own. Affinity can alleviate the dead weight of paternal authority.

It is suggested that the crisis the marriage of a son assumes for a father is the shift it entails in the distribution of authority. This is borne out by other details in the marriage ceremony referred to earlier. Ordinarily, young men dare not sing within earshot of their senior agnates. Far from allowing obscenities, agnates of the ascending generation would not allow even a mention of women to be made by young men, in their presence. In a group consisting of young men and an agnate, I chanced to use the noun for woman and immediately my tent was cleared of all but the senior agnate. At a wedding the young men revel in their lewd songs and shout their obscenities for all to hear. The senior agnates stand aside and make a show of ignoring the proceedings. And well they may, for each marriage is a challenge to the exclusive authority they have enjoyed; each nuptial tent is an invasion of the domain of which they have been undisputed masters. Marriage is the only occasion when the men of one generation can clap and sing their defiance of an older one, and give warning of the changes which must be accommodated however great the pretence that nothing has happened.

Marriage ceremonies dramatise the clash between adjacent generations over the distribution of certain forms of authority. If this authority is as overwhelming as has been suggested, and if it is so deeply resented, how is it that life is endurable for juniors? Relationships between junior and senior agnates are so restrictive that they almost amount to what Professor Fortes has suggested I view as a form of avoidance relationships. Juniors must always defer, they must obey commands promptly, they serve their seniors, they must accept a lead when it is given and the restrictions on conversations exclude all reference to women, marriage or sex. These are not simply a set of general guides for behaviour, they are rigidly applied rules, deviation from which is countered with rebuke or greater severity. It would appear from this

many African societies is that wealth is transferred. Obviously, in societies where the rules of exogamy compel a dispersion of links outside a man's own clan, what is involved in this transfer of wealth cannot be sociologically similar to one in which marriage to the first cousin on either side is permitted.

6: Peters E-5 (1948-1950) 1965 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
Cyrenaica

sorts of petty ways, listen to his grumbles about his agnates, interfere on his behalf in petty camp quarrels, shield him from the disciplinarian father and guard his property interests against the predatory father's brother; if the mother's brother dies without heirs, the sister's son can reasonably expect at least a share of his wealth. When the mother's brother is a member of a different corporate group, a sister's son cannot possibly expect to inherit from him in any circumstance.

The mother's brother may reside in a camp too distant to be much effective direct help in day-to-day living. His relative remoteness gives the relationship other possible opportunities, however. Rainfall in the semi-desert area of Cyrenaica is highly variable, both from year to year, and from place to place in any given year. As a result this shallow saucer of a depression may have sufficient rain to supply both the water needs of animals and crops, while an area a few miles distant will have inadequate water supplies for either. The mother's brother-sister's son link can mean water for animals and a crop of barley for both when, in successive years, the resources of one area or the other are inadequate.

The differences in the relations between men and their mother's brother do not end with a characterisation of their antipodal forms. The demographic structure of a group may be such that one man may have a number of mother's brothers, another only one; one man may have to share with several brothers, another may be an only son. Complications of this sort determine the precise relationships between men, but however intricate these may be, each corporate group has its matrilateral links with a group occupying a slightly different ecological area, and it also has a plurality of matrilateral connections within it. Further, if a direct connection is not available to any particular individual he can use an indirect link (e.g. father's mother's brother or mother's mother's brother) to satisfy his needs.

The Preference for Males

Thus far, the family and the social matrix in which it is embedded has been discussed in general terms, most particularly in reference to several selected sets of relationships. I wish now to place these relationships in a more specific setting with a brief discussion of the composition of a small camp of a group inhabiting the arid areas of central Cyrenaica. When the Bedouin give their views on the structure of the family in Cyrenaica they speak of it as consisting of a pair of spouses and about ten children, mainly males. The emphasis on males is not mere sentiment, overwhelmingly though it favours them against females. Additional males in a family increase the productive possibilities of a family in the sense that more herdsmen become available and larger ploughing commitments can be undertaken; an increase in the number of females has small effect on production since they are precluded from any direct participation in these activities. Both sexes, ranging in age from about seven years to mature adulthood, are necessary if a family